

## PART IV

## Pattern of Agriculture

Farms: Number and Size

Most of the agriculture in Jefferson County is on small farms. According to the United States Census of Agriculture, 1954, there were 356 properties classified as farms which was 58 less than reported in 1950. The decline was due in part to a change in Census methods; but does show the general trend in farm numbers over the state and nation. Consolidation of farms through purchase and lease has increased the average size from 91 acres in 1925 to 106 acres in 1954. Jefferson County ranked thirty-sixth among the 39 counties of the state in number of farms but was twenty-third in size of farms.

The small farms are largely the result of land acquisition, purchase methods and the types of farming. During earlier settlement much logged-over land was sold in 10, 20 and 40 acre units to part-time farmers. Subdivisions of farms on shoreline acres for residential properties has been common since 1940.

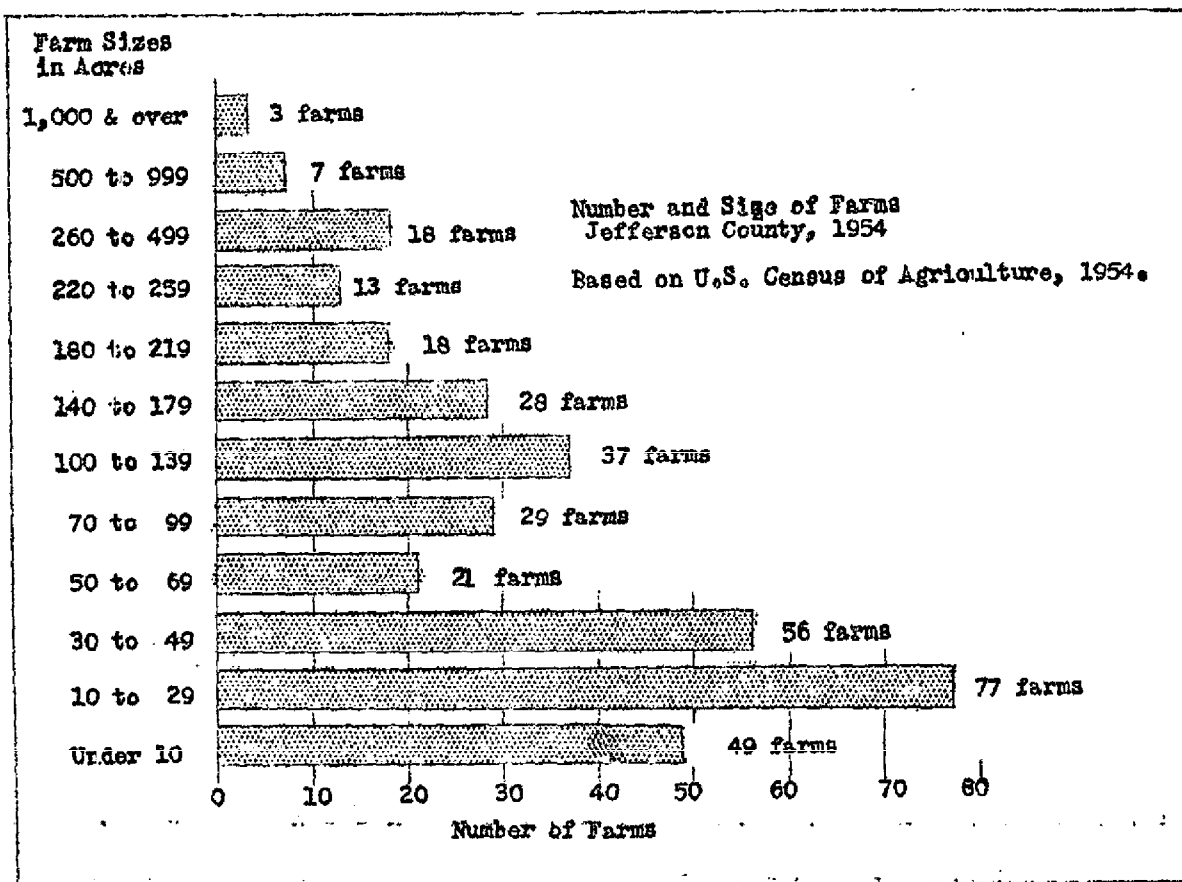


Figure 7.- Number and Size of Jefferson County Farms, 1954.

Average farm size decreased during the depression years, but since World War II has increased. The popularity of part-time farming has resulted in many small-scale farming operations in poultry, berries, livestock, dairy and specialty enterprises. Heavy costs of clearing stump and forest land have tended to discourage development of large commercial farm holdings. These and other economic factors have created a present pattern in which 55 percent of the farms are less than 100 acres. Farms from 10 to 24 acres are largest in number--totaling 77 places. In the 1954 Census there were only 28 farms of 260 acres and larger. The few farms which exceed 500 acres are mainly managed as tree farms.

Table 10.-- Farms, Number and Average Size, Land in Farms  
Jefferson County, Washington

Year	Total Farms in County	Total County area in farms (acres)	Average size of farms in the county (acres)	Percent of County area in farms
1900	212	29,289	138	2.5
1910	262	31,518	120	2.7
1920	348	35,917	103	3.1
1925	350	32,015	91	2.8
1930	272	26,046	95	2.2
1940	518	42,884	82	3.6
1945	442	45,258	102	4.0
1950	414	45,581	110	3.9
1954	356	37,977	106	3.3

Source: U. S. Census, Agriculture

In 1954 the 356 farms of Jefferson County contained 37,977 acres or only 3.3 percent of the total land area within the county. Acreage in farms increased from 29,289 acres in 1900 to a peak of 45,581 in 1950. During the depression farm acreage dropped off to 26,046 acres in 1930. From 1930 to 1950 the acreage of farm land increased to 45,581 but this dropped to 37,977 in 1954. Farm numbers declined from 518 to 356 in the 14 years 1940-1954. As opportunities outside agriculture took people off the farm at least some of the acreage they had farmed was taken over by those who remained as farmers.

### Farm Values

Value of farmland and farms has increased greatly since 1920. Values rose rapidly between 1900 and 1930 then declined during the 1930's. From a total of \$2,011,344 in 1930, farm property in Jefferson County more than doubled in value by 1954. Values per farm have shown rapid increases, with the value of farmland and buildings per farm averaging nearly \$14,000 or \$130 per acre with buildings. The rise in farm and land values has been caused by several factors. One has been the general rise of prices in real estate and standing timber throughout the western United States. Value has been added by the large amount of labor and capital needed for clearing and improving the land during the last thirty years. Another factor is the increased demand for rural home and small-farm acreage related to the general growth of industrial population.

Table 11.- Value of Farm Property  
Jefferson County, 1900-1954

Year	Total Value All Farm Property in County	County Average Values	
		Per Farm (dollars)	Per Acre (dollars)
1900	\$ 740,229	\$ 3,490	\$ 25
1910	1,975,980	7,542	63
1920	2,746,115	6,359	62
1930	2,011,344	7,395	77
1940	2,423,945	4,679	57
1950	4,140,000	10,000	107
1954	4,982,932	13,997	128

Source: U.S. Census, AgricultureTypes of Farms

Nearly 70 percent of the farms in Jefferson County derive their income from such a variety of sources that they cannot be classified as to major source of income. The result is that these 70 percent are classed as miscellaneous in 1954 by the U. S. Census of Agriculture. Dairy with 75 is the leading type of specialty farm from an income standpoint followed by poultry (15) and livestock (15).

Table 12.- Types of Farms, Jefferson County, 1954

Type of Farms	Number of Farms	Percent of all farms in the county
Total farms in county.....	368	
Field-crop farms.....	0	
Cash-grain.....	0	
Other field-crop.....	0	
Vegetable farms.....	5	1.3
Fruit-and-nut farms.....	5	1.3
Dairy farms.....	75	20.4
Poultry farms.....	15	4.1
Livestock farms other than dairy and poultry	15	4.1
General farms.....	0	
Primarily crop.....	0	
Primarily livestock.....	0	
Crop and livestock.....	0	
Miscellaneous and unclassified farms.....	253	68.8

Source: U.S. Census, AgricultureFarm Residence and Operation

Jefferson County agriculture is characterized by the large proportion of operators who reside on the farm and who divide their employment between work on and off the farm. Lumbering, forestry and other industrial and construction

operations on the Olympic Peninsula provide a variety of seasonal and part-time jobs. Most of the county can be classified as a region of part-time farming. At some time of year about 77 percent of all Jefferson County farmers worked off their farms during 1954, according to the Census of Agriculture. Out of this group, over 250 or nearly 70 percent of the farmers held jobs in nonfarm industries more than 100 days of the year. These part-time farmers received more income from off-farm employment than from sales of crops and livestock.

### Farm Tenure

In Jefferson County a very large majority (86 out of each 100 farmers) own and fully operate their farms. Many farms have remained in ownership of the pioneer families who established them. Tenancy, or the renting and leasing of entire farms, has been decreasing since 1940. In 1954 only 14 out of 354 farms were operated by tenants. There has been an increase in partly owned farms during the last 30 years. Manager-operated farms are few, only one being reported in 1954. The low percentage of managerial operations is common throughout most of the western Washington counties.

Table 13.- Farm Tenancy, Number and Percent of Farms  
By Tenure of Operator, Jefferson County  
1925-1954

Year	Number Farms in County	Full Owners		Part Owners		Managers		Tenants	
		number of farms	percent of all farms	number of farms	percent of all farms	number of farms	percent of all farms	number of farms	percent of all farms
1925	350	300	85.7	9	2.6	4	1.1	37	10.6
1930	272	222	81.6	15	5.5	2	.7	33	12.1
1935	450	351	78.0	28	6.2	7	1.6	64	14.2
1940	518	405	78.2	17	3.3	1	.2	95	18.3
1945	442	370	83.7	28	6.3	1	.2	43	9.7
1950	412	352	85.4	32	7.8	1	.2	29	7.0
1954	354	304	85.9	37	10.4	1	.3	14	4.0

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

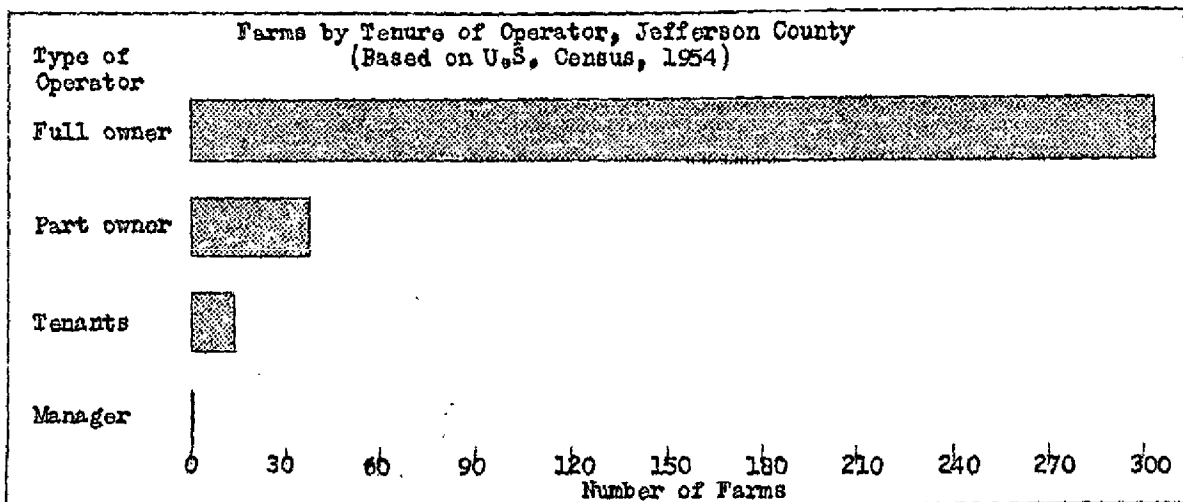


Figure 8.- Farms by Tenure of Operator, Jefferson County, 1954

### Farmland Utilization

Crops were harvested from only about 12 percent of the farm land in 1954. An additional 13 percent was in cropland used only for pasture and one percent lay idle or in fallow. Typical of western Washington farmland utilization, especially counties in the Olympic Peninsula, woodlands make up the largest share of the acreage. Woodlands which were not being grazed amounted to 45 percent and a little over 20 percent of all farmland was in pastured woodland in 1954. Altogether, the woodland covered about 25,000 acres or about two-thirds of the land in farms. Douglas fir and alder timber grow well under natural conditions and farmers have found that clearing Douglas fir cut-over land is expensive. Some farmers have left such acreage in stumps and brush as woodland pasture or Christmas tree land. Many part-time and some full-time farmers are beginning to practice farm forestry for the harvesting of Christmas trees and forest greens which are shipped to eastern markets. Others have left dense regrowth stands undisturbed to grow timber for farm use and for future commercial cutting.

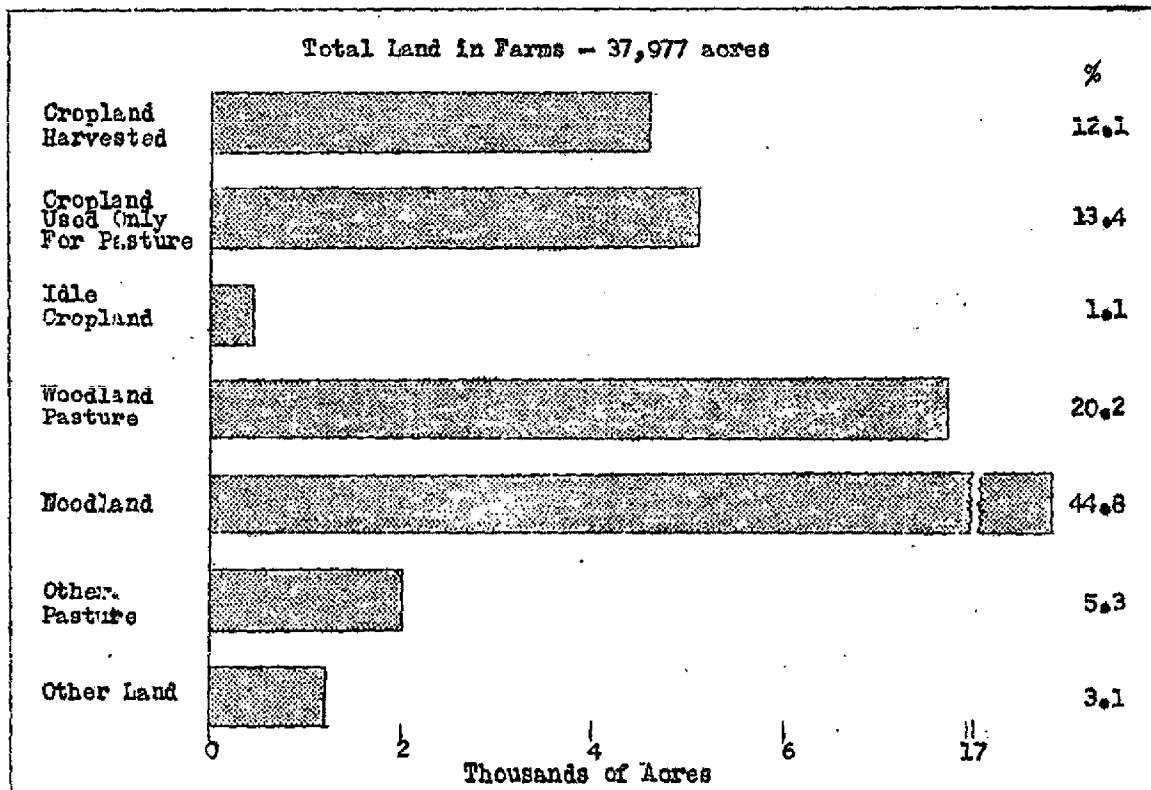


Figure 9.- Utilization of Farmland in Jefferson County, 1954

### Farm Facilities

The Census of Agriculture, 1954, showed that many Jefferson County farms were below the state average in the use of facilities which save labor and make rural life easier. However, farmers in this county do enjoy an extensive rural electric service. About 94 percent of farm homes and buildings were equipped with electricity and 75 percent reported having telephones. State averages for these facilities on farms were 97 and 74 percent, respectively. Farming is located in the Olympic Peninsula area within the reception zone of

stations located in Seattle, Bellingham and Canada, allowing a higher than average number of rural homes (nearly 64 percent of them) to have television sets. Most of the farms also have piped running water and a little over one-fourth have home freezers.

Farming in Jefferson County is not mechanized to the degrees found in the more commercially developed farm counties of the state. Several conditions limit the use of labor-saving devices. The more important ones are the large number of small farms, the large number of part-time farming operations, small fields and the tendency to raise products which require little mechanized machinery. The heavily wooded and irregular terrain also limits the use of wheels. Most common equipment found on Jefferson farms are tractors, motor trucks and milking machines. Ownership of automobiles is higher than the national farm average. Only a small number of farms use field implements such as grain combines, pick-up balers and field forage harvesters.

Table 14.- Specified Facilities and Equipment on Farms  
Jefferson County, 1954

Facility or Equipment Item	Number of Farms Using	Percent of All Farms in County Equipped
Telephone.....	268	75.3
Electricity.....	333	93.5
Television set.....	226	63.5
Piped running water.....	333	93.5
Home freezer.....	97	27.2
Electric pig brooder.....	5	1.4
Power feed grinder.....	30	8.4
Milking machine.....	95	26.7
Grain combines.....	10	2.8
Corn pickers.....	--	--
Pick-up balers.....	20	5.6
Field forage harvesters.....	20	5.6
Artificial ponds, reservoirs and earth tanks.....	16	4.5
Motortrucks.....	218	61.2
Tractors.....	238	66.9
Automobiles.....	283	79.5

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

### Irrigation and Facilities

In recent years there has been an increased interest in irrigation. In 1954 there were 765 acres irrigated compared with 478 in 1949. This is nearly a 38 percent increase in irrigated land. Dairy men find that sprinkler irrigation increases the cattle forage capacity of upland pastures. Berry and vegetable growers adopt sprinkler irrigation to get better yields. The gravelly glacial soils commonly found in eastern Jefferson County require considerable irrigation during the dry, late summer months. Soil drainage on the slopes is rapid during the winter season.

Table 15.- Irrigated Farms: Number and Acreage  
Jefferson County, 1950 and 1954

Item	1950	1954
Number of irrigated farms.....	19	20
Land in irrigated farms.....	2,850 acres	3,913 acres
Land irrigated <u>1/</u> .....	478 acres	766 acres
Irrigated land in farms according to use:		
Farms irrigating crops.....	11	14
Farms irrigating pastures.....	17	14
Acres of crops irrigated.....	248	288
Acres of pasture irrigated.....	230	478

1/ Includes land irrigated by canals, pipes and overhead sprinkler systems.

Source: U. S. Census, Agriculture

Irrigation in this county consists of 20 individually or farm-owned systems which employ mainly wells, pumps and sprinklers. There are also a number of artificial ponds which catch and hold water during the late winter and early spring run-off. In 1954, nearly two-thirds of the irrigated land was in pasture and the remaining one-third in hay. The use of more irrigation in Jefferson County follows a general trend in the other western Washington counties.